

VZCZCXYZ0000  
PP RUEHWEB

DE RUEHUNV #0002/01 0051523  
ZNY CCCCC ZZH  
P 051523Z JAN 09  
FM USMISSION UNVIE VIENNA  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8877  
INFO RUEHII/VIENNA IAEA POSTS COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L UNVIE VIENNA 000002

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR IO/T AND ISN/MNSA

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/04/2019  
TAGS: [AORC](#) [PREL](#) [IAEA](#) [KNNP](#) [JA](#) [SF](#)  
SUBJECT: IAEA/DG: NOMINATIONS DEADLINE CLOSES WITH ONLY  
MINTY AND AMANO IN THE RACE - REQUEST FOR GUIDANCE

Classified By: Ambassador Gregory L. Schulte for reasons  
1.4 b and d

Summary

1. (C) At the close of the December 31 deadline, only Japan and South Africa had submitted nominations for IAEA Director General, Japanese Governor Yukiya Amano and South African Governor Abdul Minty. This ends all speculation about other candidates emerging in the first round of voting. The Board Chair will now initiate consultations with Board members in January-February and may conduct straw polls leading up to a formal vote, expected at the March Board. Only if one of the two candidates fails to muster the required two-thirds support would a new call for nominations go out allowing for other possible candidacies. It is possible that the election could be decided in March if Amano, the leading candidate, secures the required two-thirds support. If Amano fails in his strategy of achieving an early victory, the odds are good that others could throw their hats into the ring, further splintering the race. GUIDANCE REQUEST: The Board Chair will assuredly seek consultations with the U.S. in the imminent future. Mission requests guidance to advise the Chair of the U.S. position on the next IAEA DG by February 1. End Summary and Guidance Request.

Minty-Amano to Face-off in First Round

2. (SBU) In a January 2 letter, Board Chair Feroukhi informed Board members that she had received only two nominations, that of Japanese Governor Yukiya Amano and South African Governor Abdul Minty, to succeed IAEA Director General ElBaradei and circulated communications from each of their governments. Notably, both South Africa and Japan's letters highlighted promotion of peaceful uses of nuclear energy, though Japan added "while ensuring non-proliferation." Japan also noted that Amano is a "particularly skillful and effective administrator, possessing broad and solid management experience."

3. (SBU) The Secretariat of the Policy-Making Organs (PMO) advised that the Board Chair would now proceed with consultations with Board members in January-February to see if a consensus can emerge. The Board may invite the candidates to address an open session as "early as possible" after the closure of the nominations deadline in accordance with the Procedures for Appointment of the Director General (GOV/2008/44). Although there are only two candidates, the Board may still conduct informal "straw polls" with a view to facilitating consensus or laying the groundwork for a formal vote. PMO expected that the Board Chair would be pressured, particularly by Japan, to conduct early straw polls in February, leading up to a formal vote likely at the March 3-7 Board session (Note: Straw polls would be conducted in closed session by secret ballot, much like the formal vote.

End note). The Japanese Mission told us that they had been promised Feroukhi's consultations would be conducted with a neutral Secretariat witness in order to ensure a fair process. Japan hopes to avoid a divisive debate by demonstrating early Board support for Amano.

Could This Be Over in March ?  
-----

14. (C) The first round of voting will thus be a run-off between Amano and Minty, which may settle the issue if one of the two candidates can secure the required two-thirds vote. Only if the Board is deadlocked in March and the slate is wiped clean, would the Board Chair issue a new call for nominations allowing others to enter the race, as has happened in the past. Japan would also likely re-nominate Amano in such a scenario. While the possibility of Amano securing the election in the first round cannot be entirely ruled out, the best Minty can hope for is obtaining a blocking one-third vote. If Amano were able to firm-up support among eight EU members on the Board (who will vote their national positions rather than as a block) along with the five JUSCANZ, win over most of the GRULAC (four potential votes not counting Cuba and Ecuador) and confirm commitments received from at least three others, Amano would be at 20 of the 23 votes required. Russia and China could potentially bring him over the line. A perception that there is no better third party alternative could reinforce support for Amano. Alternatively, some countries, including some of the EU, could pin their hopes on a better candidate emerging and vote "blank" (or for Minty) to block Amano in the first round.

15. (C) The Board Chair's letter ended rampant speculation

about other aspirants emerging prior to the December 31 nominations deadline for the first round. Rumors about OPCW head Rogelio Pfrter, who had not secured the backing of the Argentine government, and former Mexican President Zedillo entering the race came to nothing. The Mexican Mission dismissed talk of a Zedillo candidacy as speculation. Former Slovenian Permrep and Board Chair Ernest Petric also advised Ambassador Schulte in December of his interest in running but decided to hold off. According to Petric, his Prime Minister and Foreign Minister would support his candidacy, if the Board becomes deadlocked and no other EU candidate comes forward. The UK and France are dismissive of Petric, though he was helpful on Iran issues during his tenure as Board Chair. Former Chilean Board Chair Milenko Skoknic may also reemerge in the case of deadlock. He has told us he remains interested but will make no decision until seeing how the first round of voting plays out. Among other potential candidates are former Technical Cooperation DDG Normaly Bin Muslim of Malaysia and internal candidates, EXPO Director Vilmos Cserveny and Safeguards DDG Olli Heinonen.  
SCHULTE